Iron County Register

BY ELI D. LAKE.

IRONTON, - - - MISSOURI.

"HOME, SWEET HOME."

AS BRET HARTE MIGHT HAVE WRITTEN IT.

Brown o' San Juan,
Stranger, I'm Brown.
Come up this mornin' from Frisco—
Ben a-saltin' my specie-stacks down.

Ben a-knockin' around,
Fer a man from'n San Juan,
Putty considable frequent—
Jes' catch onter that streak o' the dawn!

Right thar lies my home—
Right thar in the red—
I could slop over, stranger, in po'try
Would spread out old Shakespoke cold dead.

Stranger, you freeze to this; there aint no kinder gin-palace
Nor no variety-show lays over a man's own rancho.
May be it haint no style, but the queen in the Tower o' London
Aint got naathin' I'd swop for that house over thar on the hill-side.

Thar is my ole gal, 'n' the kids, 'n' the rest o my live-stock;
Thar my Remington hangs, and thar there's a griddle-cake brilin'—
Fer the two of us, pard—and thar, I allow, the heavens
Smile more friendly-like than on any other locality.

Stranger, nowhere else I don't take no satisfaction.
Gimme my ranch 'n' them friendly old Shanghai chickens—
I brung the original pair f'm the States in eighteen-'n'-fifty—
Gimme them, and the feelin' of solid domestic comfort.

Yer parding, young man—
But this landscape a-kind
Er flickers—I 'low 'twus the po'try—
I thought that my eyes had gone blind.

* * * * * * *

Take that pop from my belt!
Hi, thar—gimme yer hand—
Or I'll kill myself—Lizzie! she's left me—
Gone off with a partier man!

Thar, I'll quit—the ole gal
An' the kids!—run away!
I be derned! Howsomever, come in, pard—
The griddle-cake's thar, anyway.

—*H. C. Bunner, in Scribner.*

THE BOTTOMLESS BLACK POND.

About half a mile from the town of Danford, there was an extensive and beautiful piece of forest land. Many of the trees were large and picturesque, the ground beneath them was generally free from unpleasant undergrowth and bushes, and, in some places, it was covered with moss and delicately-colored wild flowers; there were green open, glades, where the bright sunshine played fantastic tricks with the shadows of the surrounding trees, and, altogether, the Danford forest was a delightful place, and any visitor, of ordinary reasoning powers, would have supposed it to be a favorite resort of the towns-people.

But it was not so; very few people, excepting now and then some boys of a disobedient turn of mind, ever visited it. The reason for this was the fact that near the center of the woods lay a large pond which had a bad reputation. This pond was so large that in some parts of the country, where such bodies of water are not common, it would have been called a lake.

In ordinary cases the presence of such a sheet of water would have greatly added to the attractions of the place, but this pond exercised an influence which overbalanced all the attractive beauties of the woods, and made it a lonely and deserted spot.

The reason of this was the peculiar reputation of the Black Pond. A great many strange things were said about it. Its color was enough to mystify some people, and terrify others, for, it was as black as ink. Persons who had stood upon its edge and had looked down upon it, and over its wide expanse, were unable to see an inch below the surface of the water, which, instead of being transparent, appeared, when there was no wind, like one of those dark-colored mirrors called "Claude Lorraine glasses," in which a whole landscape is reflected like a little living picture, with all its proportions, its perspective and its colors, perfectly preserved.

It might have been supposed that this lake would have presented an attractive picture, on bright days, when the sky, the clouds and the overhanging foliage were reflected in its smooth and polished surface; but water which is as black as ink is not the kind of water that people generally like to look at. There are ordinary ponds and lakes and rivers, in which the sky, clouds and trees are reflected in a way that is good enough for anybody.

But although it was in color such a blot upon the beauty of the Danford woods, the blackness of this pond was not the greatest objection to it. The most dreadful thing about it was that it had no bottom! There is something truly terrifying in the idea of a body of water that is bottomless. There are persons who would feel much safer in sailing over those portions of the ocean which have been proved to be five or six miles deep, than over the vast expanses of rolling billows where bottom has never been found.

And it was well known that bottom had never been found in the Black Pond. Some had heard this from their fathers, and fathers from their fathers, for Danford was an old town, and the Black Pond had always been the same, as far back as the local history and traditions went.

For a long time no attempts at sounding or examining in any way the waters of the pond had been made. Any undertaking of the kind would have been too dangerous. There was no boat on the pond, and it was not easy to carry one there, and if persons wished to go out in the middle of the pond to make soundings a raft would have to be built, and the consequences to any one falling off this would be too terrible to contemplate. Even the best swimmer would fear to find himself in water where he would probably become cramped and sink, and be sucked down, and down, and down, nobody knows where.

In winter, when the pond was frozen over, and so might have offered a temptation to the skating boys of the town—for there are boys who think that any kind of water is safe if it is covered with ice—the parents and guardians of Danford so sternly forbade any venturing on the surface of that dangerous pond that no owner of skates ever dared to try them on the dark ice which covered a still darker mystery beneath.

In fact, those boys who had even ventured to the edge of the pond, in winter or summer, had generally been fellows, as has been intimated before, who had been sold never to go near it.

And so it happened that the presence of this dismal piece of water made people unwilling that their children should go into the woods, for fear that they might wander to the pond. And, as they did not wish to do themselves what they had forbidden to their children, they took their own rural walks in others directions, and the woods, thus getting a bad name throughout that country, gradually became quite lonely and deserted.

At the time of our story there lived in the town of Danford a man named Curtis Blake, who was well known on account of a peculiar personal characteristic. He had no arms. He had been a soldier and had lost them both in battle.

Curtis was a strong, well-made man, and as he had a very good pair of legs left to him after the misfortunes of war, he used them in going errands and in doing anything by which walking could be made useful and profitable. But, as there was not much employment of this kind to be had, he frequently found himself with a great deal of time—not on his hands exactly—but which he could not advantageously employ. Consequently he used to ramble about a good deal in a purposeless sort of way, and one summer afternoon he rambled into the Danford woods.

He found it very cool and pleasant here, and he could not help thinking what a pity it was that the towns-people could not make a resort of these woods, which were so convenient to the town and so delightful in every way. But, of course, he knew it would never do for families, or for any one, in fact, to frequent the vicinity of such a dangerous piece of water as the Black Pond.

And, thinking of the Black Pond, he walked on until he came to it and stood upon its edge, gazing thoughtfully out upon its smooth and somber surface.

"If I had arms," said Curtis to himself, "I'd go to work and find out just how deep this pond is. I'd have a boat carted over from Stevens's Inlet—it's only four or five miles—and I'd row out into the middle of the pond with all the clothes-line I could buy or borrow in the town, and I'd let down a good, heavy lead, that wouldn't be pulled about by currents. I'd fasten on line after line, and I think there would certainly be enough rope in the whole town to reach to the bottom. But, having no arms, I couldn't lower a line, even if I had a boat. So I can't do it, and I'm not going to advise any other folks to try it, for ten to one they'd get excited and tumble overboard, and there would be an end of them, and I'd get the blame of it. But I'd like to know, anyway, how soon the bottom begins to shelve down steep. If we knew that, we could tell if there'd be any danger to a little codger who might tumble in from the shore. And if it does shelve sudden, the town ought to put up a high fence all around it. I've a mind to try how deep it is near shore."

If Curtis had been like other men, he would have cut a long pole and tried the depth of the pond a short distance from land. But he could not do that, and there was only one way in which he could carry out his plan, and that he determined to try. He would carefully wade in and feel with his feet for the place where the bottom began to shelve down. This was a rash and bold proceeding, but Curtis was a bold fellow and not very prudent, and he had become very much interested in finding out something about the bottom of this pond. It was not often, now, that he had anything to interest him.

He wore high boots, in which he had often waded, and his clothes were thin linen, of not very good quality, so that if they became blackened by the water it would not much matter. As for taking cold when he came out, Curtis never thought of that. He was a rough fellow and could soon dry himself in the sun.

Having made up his mind, he did not further delay, but stepped cautiously into the water. Even near the shore he could not see the bottom, and he moved very slowly out, feeling his way carefully with one foot before he made a step. He did not expect that the bottom would begin to descend rapidly very near the shore, but as he got out ten or fifteen feet from land and found the water considerably above his knees, he began to take still greater precautions. He advanced sidewise, standing on one foot and stretching the other one out as far as he could, to make sure that he was not on the edge of an unseen precipice. In this way he went slowly on and on, the water getting deeper and deeper, until it was up to his waist. He now felt a slight rise in the bottom before him. This made him very cautious, for he knew that where there was a great opening down into the bowels of the earth there was, almost always, a low mound thrown up around it, and this mound he had probably reached. It sloped up very gently on the side where he was, but on the other side it might go down almost perpendicularly.

So no man ever moved more slowly through the water than did Curtis now. A few inches at a time, still feeling before him with one foot, he went cautiously on. He was very much excited, and even a little afraid that he might unaware reach the edge of the precipice, or that the ground might suddenly crumble beneath him. He had not intended to venture in so far. But he did not turn back. He must go a little further. He had almost reached the edge of the great mystery of the Black Pond!

But he had not reached it yet. The ground on which he stood still rose, although by slow degrees, so that he was really higher out of water than he had been ten minutes before.

Suddenly he looked up from the water, down on which he had been gazing as if he had expected to see some deeper blackness beneath its black surface, and glanced in front of him. Then he turned and looked behind him. Then he stood still, and gave a great shout.

The shout echoed from the surrounding woods; the birds and the insects, and the rabbits, which flew, and hummed, and jumped about so freely in those solitudes, must have been amazed! Such a shout had not been heard near the Black Pond in the memory of any living thing.

It was repeated again and again, and it was a shout of laughter!

No wonder Curtis laughed. He was a good deal more than half way across the pond! He had walked right over the place where that mysterious depth was supposed to be, and the water had not reached his shoulders. The gradual rise in the bottom, which he supposed to be a mound, was the rise toward the opposite shore!

When Curtis Blake had finished laughing, he pushed through the water as fast as he could go—he almost ran—and in a very few minutes he stood on the bank, at the other side of the pond. He turned and looked back over the water. He had crossed over the very middle of the pond!

Then he laughed and laughed again, forgetting his wet clothes, forgetting everything but the fact that he, without ropes or leads or boat or raft, or even arms, had found the bottom of this dreaded piece of water, that he had actually put his foot upon the great mystery of the Black Pond!

When his merriment and delight began to quiet down a little, he waded into the water again, at a different point from that where he came out, and crossed the pond in another direction, this time walking freely, and as rapidly as he could go. Then he ran in again, and walked about near the middle. In no place was it much above his waist.

When Curtis was fully convinced that this was the case, and that he had walked pretty nearly all over the bottom of Black Pond—at least, that part of the bottom where the water was deepest—he came out and went back to the town.

Curtis met no one as he hurried along the road from the woods, but as soon as he reached the town he went into a large store, where he was well acquainted. There were a good many people there, waiting for the afternoon mail, for, at one end of the store was the post-office.

"Why, Curtis Blake!" exclaimed a man, as he entered. "You look as if you had been half drowned."

"I ought to look that way," said Curtis, "for I've been to the bottom of the Black Pond."

No one made any response to this astounding assertion. The people just stood and looked at one another. Then Mr. Faulkner, the owner of the store, exclaimed:

"Curtis, I am ashamed of you! You must be tipsy."

"No man ever saw me tipsy," said Curtis, without getting in the least angry. He had expected to astonish people and make them say strange things.

"Then you are crazy," replied Mr. Faulkner, "for no man could go to the bottom of Black Pond and come back alive."

"There isn't any bottom!" cried one of the little crowd. "How could he go to the bottom when there is no bottom there?"

This made the people laugh, but Curtis still persisted that what he had told them was entirely correct. Not a soul, however, believed him, and everybody began to try to prove to him, or to the rest, that what he had said could not possibly be true, and that it was all stuff and nonsense. There was so much interest in the discussion that no one thought of going to see if any letters had come for him. There could be no more exciting news in any letter or newspaper than that a man avowed he had gone to the bottom of Black Pond.

"Well," said Curtis, at last, "these clothes are getting to feel unpleasant, now that I'm out of the sun, and I don't want to stay here any longer to talk about this thing. But I'll tell you all, and you can tell anybody you choose, that to-morrow morning at nine o'clock I'm going again to the bottom of Black Pond, and any one who has a mind to can come and see me do it."

And with these words, he walked off.

There was a great deal of talk that evening in Danford about Curtis Blake's strange statement and about what he had said he would do the next day. Most persons thought that he intended some hoax or practical joke; for a man without arms, and who, therefore, could not swim, could not go to the bottom of an ordinary river and expect to come back again alive. Of course, anybody could go to the bottom and stay there. There was certainly some trick about it. Curtis was known to be fond of a joke. But whatever people thought on the subject, and there were a good many different opinions, every man and boy who could manage to do it made up his mind to go the next day at nine o'clock and see what Curtis Blake intended to do at Black Pond. Even if it should turn out to be all a hoax, this would be a good opportunity to visit the famous pond, for, with so many people about, there could not be much danger. Quite a crowd of interested towns-folk assembled on the shore of the Black Pond the next day, and Curtis did not disappoint them.

About nine o'clock he walked in among them, wearing the same boots and clothes which he had worn the day before, and then, after looking around, as if to see that everybody was paying attention, he deliberately walked into the pond.

At this, everybody held his breath, but in a moment there arose calls to him to come back, and not make a fool of himself. He had no board, no life-preserver, nor anything with which he could save himself when he should begin to sink. But, fearful as the people were for his safety, not one dared to run in and pull him back.

On he went, as he had gone before, only walking a good deal faster this time, and the people now stood still, without speaking a word or making a sound. Every minute they expected to see Curtis disappear from their sight forever. The birds, the insects and rabbits might have supposed that there was nobody about, had it not been for the swashing of the man who was pushing through the water.

As Curtis approached the middle of the pond, the excitement became intense, and some men turned pale; but when he hurried on, and was seen to get into shallower water, people began to breathe more freely, and when he ran out on the opposite bank there went up a great cheer.

Now all was hubbub and confusion. Most people saw how the matter really was, but some persons could not comprehend at once, that their long-cherished idea that the Black Pond had no bottom was all a myth, and that there were incredulous fellows, who were bound to have a reason for their own way of thinking, and who asserted that Curtis had built a bridge under water, and that he had walked on it! As if a man, without arms, could build a bridge, and walk on it, without seeing it!

Curtis, however, soon put an end to all conjectures and doubts by walking over the bottom of the pond, from one side to the other, in various directions, and by wandering about in the middle in such a way as to prove to every one that there was no mystery at all about the Black Pond, and that it was nothing but a wide and nearly circular piece of water, with a good hard bottom, and was not four feet deep in any part.

The news of this discovery by Curtis Blake made a great sensation in Danford. Some people felt a little ashamed, for they had taken a good deal of pride in telling their friends, when they went visiting, about the wonderful pond, near their town, which had no bottom; but, on the whole, the towns-people were very glad of the discovery, for now they could freely enjoy the woods, and many persons were astonished to find what a delightful place it was for picnics and afternoon rambles.

As if no portion of mystery should remain about the Black Pond, even the color of its water was investigated and explained. Some scientific gentlemen from a city not far away, who came to Danford about this time, and who heard the story of the pond, went out there and examined into the cause of its inky hue. They said that it was due, like the darkness of the water of many creeks and pools, to the overhanging growth of pine, hemlock and similar trees which surrounded it. They did not explain exactly how this darkening process had been carried on, but they said it probably took hundreds of years to make the pond as black as it now was, and nobody doubted that.

But although the woods and the pond became a favorite summer resort with the Danford people, it was in winter that they really enjoyed the place the most. Then the Black Pond was frozen over, and it made the finest skating ground in that part of the country. And its greatest merit was its absolute safety. Even if a small boy should break through—which was not likely to happen—any man could step in, or reach down and take him out. The ice was generally so thick that there was scarcely three feet of water beneath it, in the deepest parts.

On fine days, during the cold months, people came out to the pond in carriages and on foot, and they had gay times, with their skating, and their games on the ice. But they were hardly so gay as the folks who could not come in the day-time, but had to do their skating in the evening. On moonlight nights, the pond was beautiful, but the skaters came on dark nights, all the same, for lamp-posts were set up in different parts of the pond (holes were cut in the ice, and they were planted firmly on the bottom), and thus the pond was made as bright and cheerful as the merriest skater could desire.

Among the merriest skaters was Curtis Blake, for skating was one of the few things he could do, and Mr. Faulkner gave him a capital pair of skates.

But this was not all the reward he received for solving the mystery of the Black Pond. Several of the leading citizens, who thought that the town owed him something for giving it such a pleasant place of resort, consulted together on the subject, and it was decided to make him keeper of the woods and pond. He had a couple of old men under him, and it was his duty to see that the woods were kept in order in summer and that the pond was free from snow and obstructions in winter.

And thus the great mystery of the Black Pond came to an end. But there were elderly people in the town who never went out to the pond, and who believed that something dreadful would happen there yet. There used to be no bottom to the pond, they said, and they should not wonder if, some day, it should fall out again.

"Yes," said Curtis Blake to one of these, "I expect that will happen—just about the time my arms begin to grow."

—*John Lewees, in St. Nicholas.*

Two Ways of Looking at Things.

Two boys went to hunt grapes. One was happy because they found grapes, the other was unhappy because the grapes had seeds in them.

Two men, being convalescent, were asked how they were. One said, "I am better to-day;" the other said, "I was worse yesterday."

When it rains one man says, "This will make mud;" another, "This will lay the dust."

Two children looked through colored glasses. One says, "The world is blue," and the other said, "It is bright."

Two boys eating their dinner, one said, "I would rather have something other than this;" the other said, "This is better than nothing."

A servant thinks a man's house is principally kitchen; a guest that it is principally parlor.

"I am sorry that I live," says one man. "I am sorry that I must die," says another.

"I am glad," says one, "that it is no worse." "I am sorry," says another, "that it is no better."

One man counts everything that he has a gain. Another counts everything else than he receives a loss.

One man spoils a good repast by thinking of a better repast of another. Another one enjoys a poor repast by contrasting it with none at all.

One man is thankful for his blessings. Another is morose for his misfortunes.

One man thinks he is entitled to a better world, and is dissatisfied because he hasn't got it. Another thinks he is not justly entitled to any, and is satisfied with this.

One man makes up his accounts from his wants. Another from his assets.—*New Haven Register.*

—A Liverpool servant girl found a revolver belonging to a lodger in a chest of drawers. While she was examining the weapon it exploded and a shot entered the lower part of her body. She managed to crawl down stairs and knock at the door of the next house, where her mistress was, but fell on the steps in an unconscious state. Surgical aid was called, but she died the same night.

—The cabmen of Dublin last year found and restored to owners almost 500 umbrellas.

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

—Queen Margherita is one of the most skillful sewing-women in Italy.

—The Empress of Austria recently sent to a reporter a dressing-case embossed in silver, as a mark of her pleasure at his account of some of her exploits in the field.

—The Princess Dolgorouki, beside innumerable jewels and other souvenirs, has received from the late Czar a legacy of about $10,000,000, which at her death will go to her children. Most of the money came from the gold mines of the Oural and of Siberia, which belong to the reigning Czar of Russia.

—Dr. Kidd, who was Lord Beaconsfield's regular physician, has the largest regular practice in London, and is an eclectic. With the exception of this gentleman, it is a curious circumstance that all around the bedside of the dying ex-Premier—Dr. Quain, Lord Barrington, Lord Rowton, James McClennan, his servant, and the two nurses—were Irish, "sentimental and self-sacrificing race," as he has styled them.

—Many Russian young ladies of position appear to have been beguiled into more or less complicity with the Nihilist party. It is said that an intimate friend of the Duchess of Edinburgh, a young lady who only the other day was one of the party who officially received the Duchess on her arrival in St. Petersburg, has since, under the pangs of remorse, confessed to a very close acquaintance with Nihilist leaders.

—The Middlesex magistrates in England have been using their power and have stopped a religious service in a music hall. Great indignation has been aroused; the Home Secretary, the Earl of Shaftesbury and others have been appealed to, and the meetings have been held in the open air pending some redress from the local authorities or else a regulation forbidding the use of theaters and places of amusement for religious purposes.

—Lord Beaconsfield had two brothers—James, deceased, and Ralph. He never associated with any of his kindred, but he appointed James, in 1852, when he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, a Commissioner of Inland Revenue, the salary of which is £2,000 a year, and his brother Ralph was, at his request, appointed by Lord Chancellor Cairns, in 1867, deputy clerk of the House of Lords, the salary of which is £1,200. They both, particularly James, bore a strong likeness to their remarkable brother.

A Picture of Havana—How the Cubans Live and Move.

Cuba is one of the fairest lands under the light of the sun, and one of the healthiest. There is probably no other country in the tropics where people of Northern birth can live more safely. It is true there is yellow fever in Havana at all times, and in the summer it becomes epidemic; but this is the effect of local causes. For a winter residence for Northern people nothing can be more delightful than the Cuban climate. Through February this year the average of the thermometer was about 70, and there was only one day of rainy, unpleasant weather. Still, the climate is never a bracing one. Even in winter a white man can not do as much hard work as he can in Pennsylvania or Iowa; and in summer he must rest during the middle of the day.

Havana is a very attractive city of semi-Moorish aspect. It is built on the western slope of a long and narrow bay. The declivity is sufficient to insure good drainage. The streets are narrow and the sidewalks are often only wide enough for a single person. The houses are built of stone, and the older ones are generally of one story. They are painted light blue and yellow. The roofs in many cases are of red tiles. In the intense sunlight of the day, the general effect is exceedingly bright and gay. The public promenades are charming, with their handsome drives, smooth walks, fountains, palms and masses of tropical flowering shrubbery. In the evening they are brilliantly lighted and filled with throngs of people, sitting, walking, talking, smoking, listening to the music, enjoying the soft, delicous air. The picture is like that of the Boulevards of Paris, except that it is broader, more varied, less crowded and less noisy.

The sewage of the city is all carried into the long and narrow harbor. The mouth of this harbor is less than half a mile wide, and the rise and fall of the tide is only two feet. Accordingly, there is no current outward, and during the hot weather of summer the contents of the bay stagnate and ferment. Hence malaria, yellow fever and the unhealthiness of the town. Engineers say that it might be changed at no great expense by cutting a canal from the head of the harbor northwestwardly to the sea, producing a current and changing continually the waters of the harbor.

The cabs of Havana are Victorias with one horse, carrying two persons. The horses are a small, active, native breed. There are thousands of these cabs, and no one has to wait to find one. The drivers are honest beyond the wont of their trade. I did not hear of an instance of one attempting to extort from a foreigner more than his lawful fare. The price of a drive to any part of the city, whether there are one or two persons in the cab, is forty cents in paper or twenty cents in coin.

Cock fights are a regular institution all over Cuba. In every village festival they play a part. Sunday appears to be a favorite day for them, and I heard of country priests going from the altar to a cock fight. In Havana there are also bull fights on Sundays, when the placards say the bulls are fought to the death; but, I did not have an opportunity to attend any of these exercises. The cock-fighting people are said to be especially gentle and kindly; though for that matter brutality and ruffianism seemed to be absent everywhere.

Hotels in Cuba are dirty. There is no clean hotel in Havana, and those most frequented by foreigners seem, if possible, to be dirtiest. It is said that in visiting any place where Spanish is the language the safe way is to go to the newest hotel.

The usage everywhere is to begin the day, say at six o'clock in the morning, with a couple of fresh oranges and a cup of coffee with sugar and milk. Breakfast, a very substantial meal, with wine and a desert of sweetmeats, follows at about 11, and dinner from six to seven. The best cooks are Chinese.

There is a great deal of dram-drinking among the people. Gin is the favorite liquor, and large quantities of it are sold, but I did not see anywhere a drunken man. Smoking is as universal and constant as breathing, but I saw no ladies smoking, though no one refrains from smoking because they are present. Cigarettes are more frequently used than cigars. No apology is required for introducing them, and no one asks his visitor or companion to join him in smoking because he assumes that the visitor has his own tobacco in his pocket and would light his cigarette if he wished to do so. The only places where one can't smoke are the churches and the theatres. At the opera I saw a man who had begun to smoke in the parquet compelled to quit the indulgence; but at the same time a cloud of smoke blown from one of the private boxes back of the proscenium excited no attention whatever. In the railroad cars everybody smokes without restraint and a special car for the purpose would be ridiculous.

There are few railroads in Cuba, and some of them are in good condition. The first-class cars have cane seats, and all the cars are shabby. In some cases, however, the road-bed is smooth and in good order. The trains are slow.—*C. A. Dana, in N. Y. Sun.*

Genius and Laziness.

About as foolish a notion as can lodge itself in the head of a young man is the idea that he is a genius, and, *therefore* industry is not necessary to his success.

The example of Sheridan, who united in himself the endowments of three extraordinary men, being a wit, a dramatist and an orator, is not unfrequently mentioned as supporting this notion. Sheridan was a genius, and he was lazy. His indolence, however, together with his dissipated and prodigal habits—the three are natural associates—weighted him so heavily in life's race that it was only now and then he appeared among the foremost. He never reached the goal. Even these appearances were due to spurts of hard work, to which he was spurred by the necessities of the occasion or the protests of friends.

"You know I am an ignoramus," he would say to political associates, when they urged him to make a speech on some important measure before the House of Commons, "but instruct me, and I'll do my best."

They would cram him with information, which his quick intellect mastered and arranged. Then he would prepare a speech, writing the more brilliant parts two or three times over. The greatest speech of his life was that which he delivered in the House of Commons, against Warren Hastings, on the question whether he should be impeached for his conduct while Governor-General of India. The best orators and critics placed it above all ancient and modern speeches. Logan, one of Hastings' defenders, said to a friend, after Sheridan had spoken for an hour. "All this is declamatory assertion without proof."

"A wonderful oration!" he muttered, when the orator had consumed another hour. "Mr. Hastings has acted very unjustifiably," was his confession at the end of the third hour. The fourth hour drew from him the indignant assertion, "Mr. Hastings is a most atrocious criminal!" The orator went on, and just as he was concluding—he spoke five and a half hours—Logan exclaimed, "Of all monsters, the most enormous is Warren Hastings!"

It is not strange that Pitt, at the conclusion of his speech, moved an adjournment to give the House time "to collect its reason." Of course, it was the product of a genius who was a natural orator. But genius had been hard at work for days, preparing with elaborate care even the pettiest details of the wonderful oration.

Sheridan, though habitually lazy, could, in special emergencies, toil like a cart-horse drawing a load up-hill. He had, at times, "the capacity for infinite pains-taking," which is Carlyle's definition of genius. If young men will add this idea to their notion of genius it will do them no harm to think themselves members of that endowed class.—*Youth's Companion.*

The Daughter of Ethan Allen.

In his reminiscences of Montreal in the *Star* of that city, Mr. J. H. Dorwin writes: "I have one more little event to mention, one that is scarcely worth recording, only that it interested me very much at the time it happened, and recalls the name of a man somewhat renowned in the Revolutionary war, and connected with an important event in Montreal's history. On the 10th of December, 1819, there died at the Hotel Dieu, on St. Paul Street, a nun known as Sister Allen. Her full name was Margaret Allen, and she was the daughter of the famous Col. Ethan Allen, who, it will be remembered, accompanied Montgomery in his invasion of Canada in 1775, and attempted, with a small detachment, to surprise Montreal, but was defeated and captured and sent to England in irons. She came from her home in Burlington, Vt., in 1808, when twenty-four years old, and thus spent eleven years in the nunnery. I never knew of her presence here until one afternoon I heard on the street that the daughter of the brave but unfortunate old soldier had just died in the Hotel Dieu, and I hurried over to see her. Her body was lying in state in the chapel, and, it being my first visit to a convent, the solemn stillness of the place, the wax burning beside the coffin, the nuns kneeling there repeating prayers for the departed soul, and above all the thoughts called up by the name and presence of the dead, all made a strong impression upon me. The body lay thus for three days, and was visited by a great many people. She was one of the most beautiful women, even in death, that ever I saw, and belonged to one of the best families in New England, and why she left the world to become a nun I never knew. It was strange, too, that the daughter should seek refuge in the very city which the father had invaded and where he met with his worst misfortune."

—In North Carolina a woman was recently admitted to the bar because, as the Chief Justice said, there seemed to be no law for or against such admission.